

Session 1: A Storm to Follow

Date: Thursday, November 16, 2017

DM: Lonny Harper

Players:

Jeffrey Gierman as Tarble the Dragonborn

Scott Joschko as Dain the Dwarf

Matt Oldenburg as Bogi the High Elf

Dave Wagner as Varis the Half Elf

Finally, my thirty days of compulsory guard duty are completed. Without other immediate purpose, I've agreed to accompany Bogi and Dain to the capital city of Calimport. Surely, a meaningful opportunity will present itself there.

While my new travel companions are very opposite, the two seem capable, and complement each other – and me – quite well. If nothing else, of everyone in our patrol, they're the pair I trust the most. I still get caught off-guard when they're directed at me, but I'm sure Bogi's mind messages will prove to be quite useful.

-Varis

We arrived in Calimport earlier this eve, and settled in the Inn of the Welcome Wench.

It'll do.

-Varis

Our first day in Calimport has already proven to be quite eventful. The inn was crowded, but I charmed a serving wench into fitting us into a table. I was enjoying a portion of roasted duck, seasoned with some sort of spiced pepper that was so delicious I could overlook the overly lumpy mashed potatoes. Bogi and Dain didn't seem to have any complaints over their food, either. Dain certainly didn't have an issue with their ale!

I had plans to revisit the wench – I forget her name? – later, then Anna arrived.

She was mysterious, and attractive enough to capture my attention. She joins us at our table and informs us that we've been under observation, and are being recruited by someone named Gamella.

Opportunity is already presenting itself – and then there's this Gamella business. Apparently, she is the daughter of Hamad, ruler of Calimshan, so I suppose she's kind of important.

Anna informs us that we are instructed to meet her at the catacombs outside the city walls. Why? What's more interesting, Bogi suggested we attempt to learn more of these plans, and Anna informs us that we are to meet with and join forces with a dragonborn! Like they really exist.

-Varis

Anna could barely resist my charm and I managed to get her to reveal that this dragonborn is actually in town. I guess he is a member of the glass-blowing guild? We're going to check him out.

But this Anna. There's something intriguing about her; she has some sort of strange tick when she speaks sometimes. And the shadows play games with her. I will need to put my pursuit of her on hold temporarily – there's a dragon to pay a visit to!

-Varis

Dragons exist!

We took leave of Anna – for now – and made our way to the glass-blowers guild. I don't know how inconspicuous we were, but we were able to gain a glimpse at the dragon. It was working in the glass-blower's shop! This thing was massive – not necessarily in height, but in build. He was covered in scales of bronze, with claws, and a head like a crocodile. I needed to get a closer look.

I told Dain and Bogi to cover me from their positions outside and I entered. I'll admit, I was nervous approaching the dragon – I could still hardly believe it was real. I can still feel the chill when I touched the scale on its shoulder. Once I had his attention, I had to come up with something quick – I really need to learn to plan ahead. I think I took a step back once it turned to face me – hopefully no one noticed. Anyway, the best I could come up with was that I needed to order a vial; a glass vial, to hold a liter of liquid. I forgot the words he used, but I'll never forget his voice.

I ended up with a perfectly crafted glass vial, wrapped in a soft cloth, and was only set back a single silver.

That was when I heard Dain call from outside: "Are we going to do this?" The dwarf sure can be boisterous. The dragon asked if I was alone. I admitted I was traveling with two companions. Apparently, it was expecting to meet with three strangers. It knew we were coming? Dain bursts into the shop and begins handling their many works of glass in a

less-than-gentle manor. I think the dragon was getting upset. I don't know where Bogi was, but the dragon must have been trying to locate him outside; he stopped conversing with me and held a stare at the front window, before giving up and shrugging its shoulders.

The shopkeeper entered the showcase floor holding a pouch of coins. Apparently, the shopkeeper received an unexpected payment in exchange for releasing the dragon from its duties for thirty moons? I don't know what all that was about, but it seemed as if the dragon had plans on coming with us.

Bogi entered around this time, and immediately captured the shopkeeper's attention. I guess it was his ears (like his are any more impressive than mine!)? The shopkeeper disappeared into the back room and returned with an old - old - book. An ancient elven opus. The shopkeeper insisted that Bogi take this tome, to fulfill some oath, and the two of them debated for some time. Dain and I stepped out with the dragon. I had to admit to the dragon that it was curiosity that drove us to seek him out.

The dragon has a name: Tarble.

Tarble joins our numbers.

-Varis

I have to admit, I feel safer now that Tarble has joined our ranks. I still don't know what he is capable of, but is better to have a dragon as an ally, not a foe, right?

While we had an idea where the catacombs were; Tarble was more familiar and led us there easily enough. It took us about an hour to make our way into the catacomb; mostly because we needed to proceed more slowly because of Tarble. Dragons can't see in the dark?

After about an hour we begin to spy what appear to be nests of some kind. I hesitate to think of what would actually live here. Near a gully of sewage. I was not happy.

We finally arrive at what looks like a 'T' intersection, where the trenches of sewage cross. The area straight ahead of us is completely black; even my exceptional elven eyesight is unable to penetrate it.

Now I know how the dragon must feel all the time. Poor guy.

Almost immediately, the darkness is lifted! An area, on a two-foot high platform, was revealed where this mysterious darkness once existed. Anna was there! It was nice to see her again. Another woman was there, too. It was Gamella. Three exits staggered the wall behind them.

Anna requested that we approach. I happily obliged. Bogi almost made me jump when he sent me one of his mind messages, letting me know he was going to hang back. I signaled my acknowledgement. Anna did not want to proceed until everyone was present. Bogi approached, but kept his back to Gamella while he held focus down the passage to our left. Apparently, he spotted some light coming from that direction. (How did I miss it? I really need to maintain my focus around Anna.) Speaking of which, she agreed to monitor this side passage with the light so we can take audience with Gamella, which was the whole reason for us being there.

It turns out Gamella suspects her father – the ruler – is trying to kill her husband, Joba. Hamad sent Joba to the Omlarandin Mountains to join war against Tethyr. I guess there are some gems or jewels there that possess extraordinary powers at certain times, and both nations want to control the area to mine them for themselves. Greedy fuckers.

Gamella showed us some artifact that both she and Joba possess; it is some compass, controlled by water somehow, that will always point to its counterpart instead of true north. That, I suppose, is how we're supposed to locate Joba. What if he lost it, and someone else finds it, and we end up tracking *them* down? Do we even know what Joba looks like? What are we supposed to do with Joba, assuming we find him? Bring him home? Be his body guards? So many questions I failed to ask. Anyway, Tarble takes this compass artifact.

Gamella also give us a message, sealed with a scorpion insignia. We're under strict orders not to open it or read it – so, of course, I want to. But I won't.

This mission we're being sent on is apparently meant to be clandestine in nature. We're not to share details of our agenda with anyone, not even the royal guard.

We're each given a set of travel papers that will provide us with safe passage to the River Ish. Beyond that point, we must be extremely careful. Gamella even took a list of equipment demands from each of us, assuring us that anything we feel we could use will be available to us back at our Inn. Mounts, too, considering we're set to travel a fair distance.

Gamella just finished instructing us that we were to leave immediately when Anna arrived and quickly moved to evacuate her. The light or lights Bogi noticed earlier – they're arriving!

-Varis

Well, that was interesting. After they left, Anna restored the magical darkness to the platform area and I lost sight of Bogi, Dain, and Tarble. I was alone outside, but hidden. Bogi made me jump again, sending me another mind-message that they're leaving. I respond, telling him to keep left – that's the wall I remember him being nearest, and I figure I can just make my way to the far wall – the left – and follow it into that corridor to meet up with them.

I enter the magically darkened area and begin making my way towards the far wall. It is terrible not being able to see! I was just past half-way across the platform when the magical darkness gets lifted!

A male voice, in a language I could understand, calls out for me to halt. I quickly glance over my shoulder and spy what appears to be a dozen royal guards. Their calls and conversations overlapped, but I was accused on several occasions of being a sorcerer of the scorpion clan, and possessing blood magic, and shadow magic. Really?!

The challenge consumes me, and my instincts take over. I wheel around to face them, drawing my sword. "Do I look like a sorcerer?" I demanded.

I think I caught them off-guard, because, despite outnumbering me by a lot, they appeared to hesitate. They seemed to be obsessed with – and possibly in fear of – these scorpion sorcerers, so I shift my approach. I will talk my way out of here, playing the role of a sorcerer if needed, and buy some time for the others to escape – or at least formulate a rescue plan. They would come back for me, right?

As if these guards aren't a big enough problem, I begin to hear scurrying sounds coming from direction we entered from. Great.

My caltrops!

I was near the left exit I told Bogi to follow, so I reach into my belt pouch and begin to collect my caltrops into my hand. While I'm supposed to be one, I have no idea what a sorcerer would do, but I do know some users of arcane magic need special materials. I keep my hand in my pouch, pretending to be reaching for one of these components a sorcerer would use, and continue my attempts to intimidate them.

The guards begin to scatter, and three of them disappear. I guess you can consider that a success, but I am still outnumbered eight-to-one.

Next thing I know, Dain returns from behind me. He wastes no time approaching them. Gotta love that dwarf. One of the guards hurls a javelin in our direction, but it passes harmlessly between Dain and myself. Dain must not have noticed or I'm sure he would have attempted to retaliate in kind. With the odds down to four-to-one, I felt a bit better about our chances, but I'm still thankful calmer heads prevailed.

One of the guards seemed the most determined to fulfill the obligations of his position. He got a closer look at me and loudly announced that I was missing the tattoos of a scorpion sorcerer. This could be bad.

Suddenly, the same guard gets a fearful look in his eyes and yells at me to get out of his head. Bogi must have sent him one of those mind-messages!

Everything happened very quickly, but Bogi returns and the guards disperse.

One problem: Where is the dragon?

-Varis

Dain spots the torchlight coming from the center passage, and we know the dragon can't see in the dark (I'm still more than a little surprised by this), so we begin our pursuit of him down this lit corridor.

Sure enough, before long, we locate Tarble... and his new friend?

While we're out narrowly avoiding a serious conversation, our dragon friend is out making friends with some cat woman. He claims he rescued her from some "furry little babies," whatever that means.

This cat woman is on a mission to destroy the cult of the scorpion, located beneath catacombs we're in.

So, we're left with a decision to make:

Do we honor Gamella's request – she did want us to leave immediately.
Or, do we follow this cat lady?

The message we're to deliver has a scorpion insignia on it. Is Gamella (and Anna) a part of the scorpion clan this cat woman is looking to destroy?
With our help?

-Varis